

# **Impact of COVID19 on Radiation Protection Training**

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## **Initial Perceptions**

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# Discussion with Associates

- ◆ EUTERP hosted an online meeting for its Associates in early November 2020.
  - 25 participants from 20 Associates.
  - mainly training providers : range of sectors
  
- ◆ The opportunity was taken to have a session to explore the **initial** impact of the prevailing challenges to radiation protection training as a consequence of the COVID19 pandemic.
  
- ◆ Forum for to share initial experiences and to provide a brief summary of the perspective from their organization/country.



# What happened ?

- Training providers reviewed options for delivery; the options pursued fall into the following categories :-
  - (i) Retain face-face delivery (where this was the modality)
    - the format/content/provider prescribed in legislation
    - preferred and the provider has the resources
    - specialist: no practicable alternative
  - (ii) Move to a blend of face-face and virtual delivery
    - “virtual” could be real-time online, or, self directed e-learning
    - some providers already had a significant blended offering
  - (iii) Move everything to virtual platforms
    - larger providers with comprehensive resources
  - (iv) Partial postponement of schedules while considering how best to accommodate all potential students

# What was the experience ?

- Retaining face-face training is the “no change” option and, in many cases, the only option, but
  - Reduced participation per session due to operational constraints
  - Greater trainer involvement required
  
- A blended approach can be very effective + efficient
  - information/knowledge transfer readily achieved on line means
  
- Accessing training online presents potentially significant savings to those requiring training
  - Employers supportive
  
- Converting an existing course to an equivalent (?) on line version is considerable work
  - A re-engineering exercise – even where there is no “practical” content new material is required
  - Good use can be made of video clips, smart graphics, simulations etc
  - Takes time and resources - but efficient ?

# What was the experience ?

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- It is clear that there are many excellent on line tools, products + platforms available for trainers to use
- The nature of on line training is that there is the potential to reach much larger audiences
- Difficult to train on practical, operational radiation protection issues in a virtual forum
- There is a loss of flexibility in approach, networking opportunities etc
  - Missing body language !

# Matters arising ?

- Where the detail of required training is prescribed in law , or is a condition in maintaining a standard (eg ISO) alternative modalities may not be an option.
- Where there was an existing issue in providing training eg in the medical sector – this has been compounded by the current circumstances
- Most expressed the view that the current circumstances have triggered a change in how radiation protection training is delivered/accessed going forward
  - The financial implications cannot be ignored
  - Greater accessibility – easier to reach wider audiences
  - Tools+ technology improving all the time
  - Improved resilience

***But ...***

# Matters arising ?

## ***But ...***

- Some concerns over the effectiveness of online training
  - Not suitable for all topic - guidance for trainers would be of value ?
    - Building skills ? Competence ?
  - Higher level examinations
  - View of Regulators ?
- Loss of face-face interactions viewed negatively (for some circumstances)
- Significant care needed when preparing virtual training events
- Is there potential for a loss of smaller training providers ?

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